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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FARMERS' BULLETIN No. 1441

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RURAL PLANNING

The VILLAGE



CITY PLANNING for convenience, efficiency, health, and social well-being has become a pressing public problem, especially since the rapid increase in urban population. Hundreds of cities have their own town planning boards and numerous others are studying or putting into effect the city plan prepared by experts to overcome intolerable conditions caused by congestion and undirected growth. Attempts to recover from past mistakes or neglect, from carelessness or inertia are costing cities millions of dollars annually.

What of the millions who live in our thousands of villages? What are they doing to make their living and social conditions more healthful, comfortable, attractive, and effective, and to provide for population increase? Villages do not always have the benefit of a detailed town plan prepared by an expert, but rural community effort has already accomplished notable results in many instances.

Why should villages be planned? Who should initiate the planning? Where should responsibility for action and accomplishment lie? How can cooperation effect desirable results? Should plans include the future? What will they cost, how can they be financed, and what difficulties will be encountered?

This bulletin is an attempt to answer these questions by giving instances of what has been done in numerous villages in many States, as well as to indicate the importance of such planning and the facility with which valuable results may be attained. It will not undertake to prepare plans for villages or to discuss technical details, but rather to show by actual accomplishment what may be done by the average country village.

RURAL PLANNING—THE VILLAGE

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WHY VILLAGE PLANNING?

IN THE UNITED STATES nearly 20,000,000 people, or about one-fifth of the population, live in villages. These tens of thousands of villages are also the service stations of more than 30,000,000 farming people, for purposes of business, education, religion, health, and social well-being. Thus the lives of almost half of our population are intimately affected by village conditions. These people, classed as "rural" by the census, produce practically all of our food supply, send leaders into nearly all walks of life, and are the chief conservators of our national ideals.

The approaches, arrangement, sanitation, and attractiveness of these villages, upon which a sound and healthy economic and social country life depends, are of vital importance to the half of our population living in the villages or using them throughout a lifetime. Villages should be easy of access; approaches should be direct, durable, and enjoyable. Physical layouts should be based on naturalness, healthfulness, and convenience; housing conditions should be sanitary, convenient, and economical; dwellings should be satisfactory to the eye and set in pleasant surroundings. There should be clean and well-kept lawns, tree-bordered streets, and good architecture.¹ Dump heaps and congested places should give way to open spaces; and public parks and playgrounds, lake shores, spots of natural beauty, and points of historic interest should be set aside for the use and enjoyment of all. Public buildings should be so located

¹ "It is time that courts recognized the esthetic as a factor in life. Beauty and fitness enhance values in public and private structures * * *. People are beginning to realize this more than before and are calling for city planning * * *." From the epochal decision of Justice Andrew Holt of the State Supreme Court of Minnesota in the case of the Twin Cities Building and Investment Co. v. City Building Inspector James G. Houghton.

and arranged as to facilitate business efficiency and stimulate civic pride.

All villages can not have all these improvements at once, but they can overcome self satisfaction and plan specifically for the betterment of conditions. The sooner these changes are planned the more easily they will be realized, year by year, even though only one improvement at a time can be made. The plan can be drawn before the village is started, taking into account existing natural conditions and allowing for necessary changes in the future. If the plan is flexible and the goal is always kept in view, the village may easily direct its growth and development, thus avoiding the necessity of making itself over later under great difficulties and at great expense.

The day of isolation has passed. No longer can villages afford to be ugly and unknown. Modern methods of transportation and communication have opened up the hidden places. Millions of tourists travel thousands of miles annually over improved highways. European villages have long realized the economic value of the tourist traffic and have prepared to take advantage of it. They have found that beauty pays, and discovered the inefficiency of the commonplace and the efficacy of individuality and physical distinction in towns as well as in people.

Village planning, whether original or continuous, is not merely a theoretical idea. It is the foresighted application of ordinary business methods in the making of public and private improvements, so that physical development will go hand in hand with social and industrial progress. It is not just a new way of spending money. It is the application of good business principles to the necessary spending of money; the spending of a little to-day that a much greater amount may be saved later. In truth, it is real conservation of public property and genuine economy of public funds.

In the different instances of village planning which follow, some are of definite, initial planning relatively well adhered to in later years; some are a combination of deliberate planning and spontaneous natural development; some are of villages largely replanned at considerable expense and trouble because of undirected early growth; and some are of villages doing one notable thing at a time all directed toward the general future well-being. In all, the human element is uppermost. Group action predominates. Social well-being always results whether it is the direct objective or the consequence of primary economic aims.

TYPES OF PLANNED VILLAGES

VILLAGES REPLANNED

A VILLAGE INITIATES A CIVIC CENTER ON THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS INCORPORATION—WESTON, MASS.

A good example of a village with little original planning, which recognized, though tardily, the need of a more attractive and efficient arrangement, may be found at Weston, Mass., a town of 2,282 people, which has recently established a civic center, at the same time doing away with a disfigurement of the landscape. The plan had been agitated for 25 years, but the 200th anniversary celebration of the founding of the town aroused the interest needed to initiate the enter-

prise. The desirability of a civic center was brought to immediate attention through the proposed location by the town authorities of a new fire station house at a place which did not fit in with the improvement plan.

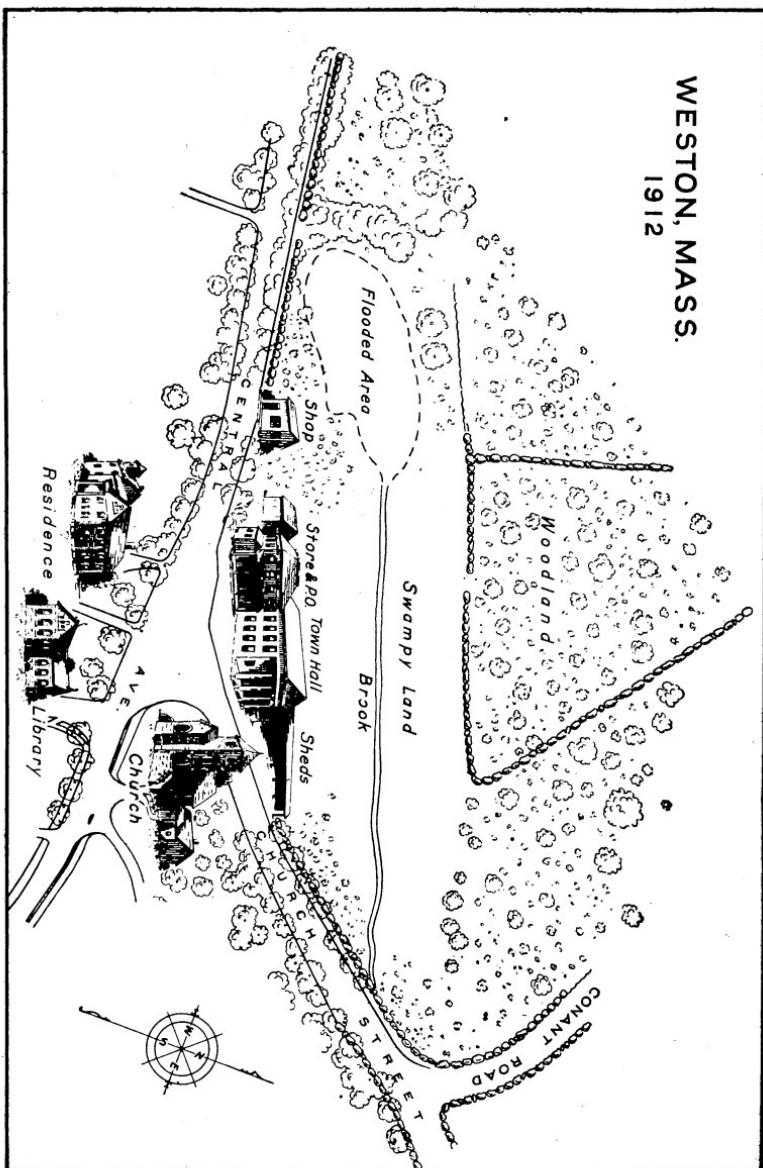


FIG. 1.—The town center of Weston, Mass., before replanning

The objects of the originators of the civic center were: (1) To have important public buildings, including the new fire station, centrally grouped; (2) to prevent an undesired development of an open space in the center of the village about which the erection of small, poorly planned buildings was contemplated; (3) to remove unsightly small

shops and old, unattractive buildings already about this place; (4) to reclaim low, swampy ground, conducive to disease, forming part of this central open space; and (5) to make over this central open space into an attractive town common.

Fronting the central open space at an important street intersection and facing the main street was a group of old buildings, consisting of a general store and post office, the town hall, small tailor and shoe-repairing shops with barns and shed. (See fig. 1.) The old post office was moved across the street to a prominent position in the proposed new civic center and was rebuilt. The town hall was torn down, and a new building of dignified and attractive design, with well-prepared ground improvements, was erected on an elevation facing the opposite side of the open space. (See fig. 2.) One shop was removed to a less conspicuous but still central place, and the other shop, sheds, and barns were destroyed.



FIG. 2.—The new town hall across the new common after replanning, Weston, Mass.

The offensive swamp land occupying the space between the moved buildings and the new town hall was drained, filled in, graded, seeded to grass, and planted to pine, fir, and chestnut trees to form a town common. The oval shape and undulating topography give it distinction. The new fire station, of durable materials and good design, was placed beside the post office, nearly opposite the entrance to the common. A well-built graveled road, one-third of a mile long, was constructed on the side of the common facing the hall. This connected with the main street in front of the common, the two forming an elliptical roadway around it. Wide graveled walks were constructed on both sides of the common and one across it, connecting the main street with the new hall.

To conform to the harmony of the new civic center, the church, located near the post office, was reconstructed and made more attractive in building and grounds. The library was built a few years previous to the contemplated new development but with the anticipation of conforming to it when completed. It was well designed and set in attractive grounds near the church. Recently another

church whose architectural features and setting combine well with the new scheme of things was erected near the post office.

Three streets approach the common by curves, forming a smaller open space with a fountain and flag pole in the center. About this

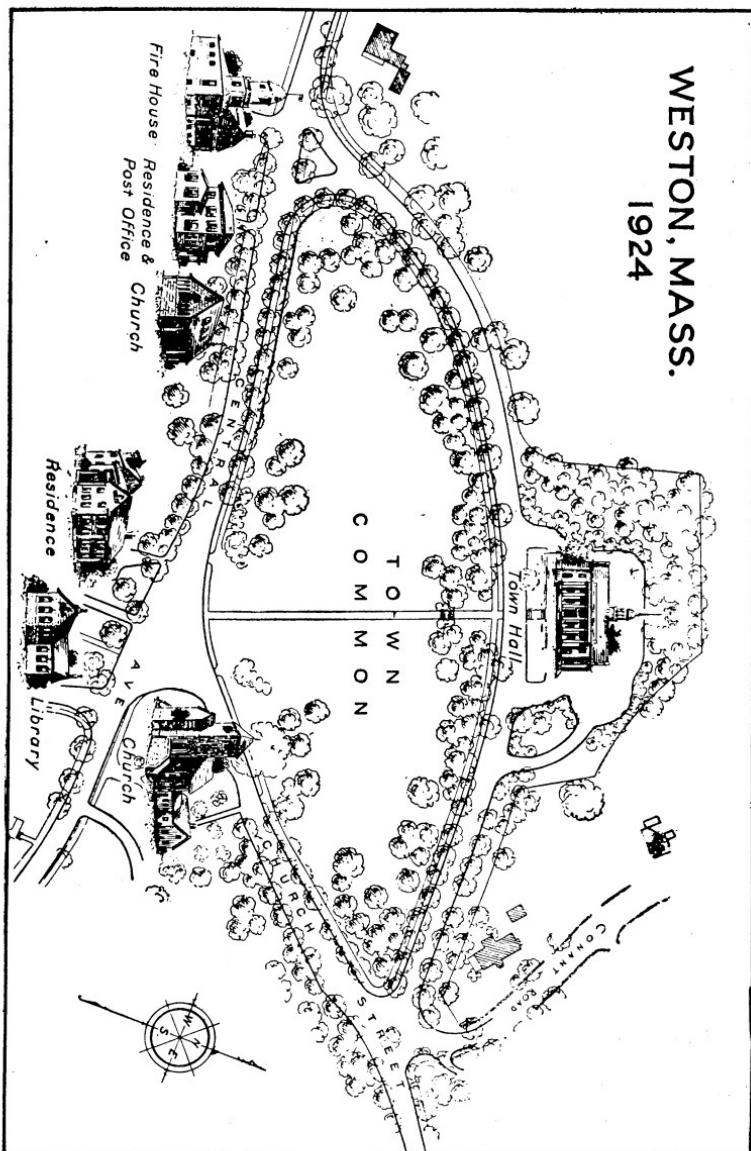


FIG. 3.—The town center of Weston, Mass., after replanning

are placed the two churches, library, new fire station, and post office and general store, while the new town hall occupies a commanding position across the oval common. (See fig. 3.)

These improvements were planned by a landscape architect and were developed in a natural way by the town improvement com-

mittee during the time from 1913 to 1918. The town took the land by right of eminent domain, voted upon at town meeting, and owners were awarded damages. No lawsuits resulted. The project was financed through taxation and from donations.

Of course this work was pursued under difficulties. The blue prints of the plans were prepared 25 years before work was begun. It took that long to overcome the doubts of the cautious ones. Some said that since the town had gone along for 200 years in the old way it was better to let well enough alone. Others said that the plan would be a fine thing for other towns, but that there were exceptional conditions in Weston which precluded successful execution. The result was that it cost twice as much as it would have cost 25 years earlier.



FIG. 4.—North end of common, showing First Parish Church, built in 1747. Cohasset, Mass.

CIVIC BODIES ADD TO CONVENIENCE AND ATTRACTION OF A BEAUTIFUL VILLAGE—COHASSET, MASS.

Long before the Improvement Association and the Sandy Beach Association were formed, Cohasset, Mass. was widely recognized as a village having many desirable planning features. Its citizens had already demonstrated that beauty was not inimical to the practical in modern town progress.

The most notable feature in the center of the village is the ancient common, 1,600 feet in length, with one end approaching the harbor on Massachusetts Bay. Near the center of the common stands the stately First Parish church, built in 1747 to replace the original building erected in 1722 for church and town purposes. (See fig. 4.) South of the church is a natural pond with planned surroundings. (See fig. 5.) Across the street and facing the common stands the town hall and a century-old church; and near the southern end, on a slight rocky eminence, is a church of Gothic architecture. Near this are the post office and the police station, and further on the school, the public library, and another church. With well-kept lawns, century-

old elms, and attractive houses and public buildings this common adds distinction to an interesting village.

Much civic interest has been taken by Cohasset in its harbors. In 1914, at the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the discovery of the place, by Capt. John Smith, the town dedicated a covered public landing well-planted with shrubbery and marked by a commemorating tablet boulder. The town has also provided two landings for fishermen. The village has taken advantage of small open spaces at street intersections to make four of them into triangular parks, each about 200 feet on a side, and a wooded park of 80 acres was presented to the town some years ago.

Notwithstanding the attractive appearance and convenient layout of the village, its people backed by its civic bodies are not content with things as they are and constantly work in various ways to improve it. Three notable efforts along replanning lines have recently been accomplished or are in progress.

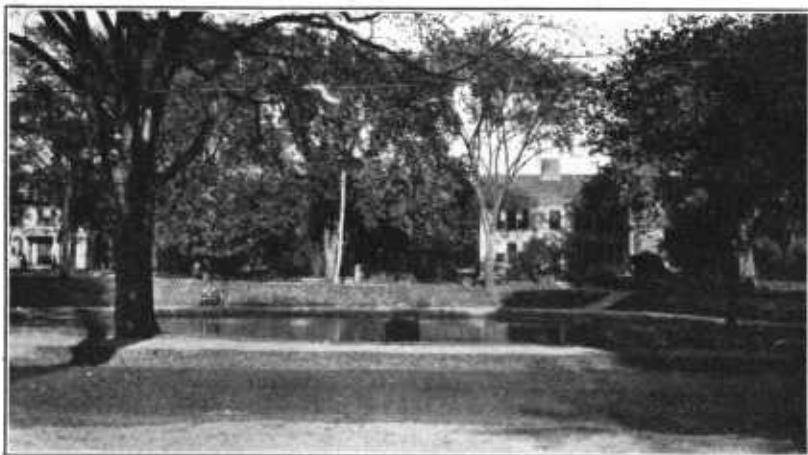


FIG. 5.—Natural pond in the center of the common, improved during replanning of Cohasset, Mass.

The restoration of the common was the first. The rocky knoll on which one of the churches stands was formerly a part of the common. During some apparent lapse of civic interest this land had been sold by the town for church purposes. The part of the common between the pond and the church had become occupied by a general store, dwelling, and outbuildings. An awakened civic consciousness, as reflected by the Improvement Association, resulted in the restoration of this second parcel of land to its intended use. After considerable effort and an expenditure of about \$15,000 obtained largely through public subscription from more than a hundred people, the association purchased the land and presented it to the town. The work involved clearing the land of buildings, grading, making important road alterations, and providing improved facilities for automobile parking. This restoration did away with unsightly buildings and brought harmony to the common by making a continuous sweep to the church on the rock. (See fig. 6)

The Improvement Association wanted an inviting gateway to the village. They purchased, with about \$6,500 in subscriptions, the stable lot opposite the railroad station near the end of the common and turned it into a park. They removed unsightly buildings and rubbish, filled in, graded and seeded it, set aside a parking space, and built walls and paths. When landscaping effects have been completed the visitor by rail will have a worthy introduction to better things to be found in the village.

With the gradual but almost total acquirement of the public shore line for private purposes, some citizens feared that no bathing beach would remain for the use of town and country people. To provide for such use, public-spirited citizens formed the Sandy Beach Association and succeeded in acquiring a fine stretch of beach 1,200 feet in length on a partially inclosed body of salt water. At a cost of \$14,000, they removed temporary bath houses and erected a bathing pavilion with 84 compartments, providing 150 lockers, observation



FIG. 6.—Partial view of place where buildings were removed and common restored in replanning of Cohasset, Mass.

platform, lobby, office, fresh-water shower baths, and toilets. Parking space was provided for in front of the pavilion. A good road connects this improvement with the village. Funds were provided by sale of shares of voting but nondividend paying stock. The rental of compartments, lockers, beach chairs, and umbrellas, with fees from users from a distance, serve to make the pavilion self-supporting. It is managed by a board of trustees. Taxes are not assessed upon the property on account of its public nature. Various social features have been put into operation in connection with the pavilion, including popular annual prize swimming races.

All this (fig. 7) has been accomplished without the help of municipal planning boards, but through the zeal of leading citizens and civic associations. Of these results one of the leaders states: "The restoration of the common increased the value of real estate, made the town more attractive and a more desirable place for homes. The station lot improvements added to the creditable appearance of

the town, and the bathing pavilion furnished a community center during the summer where bathing can be enjoyed with comfortable

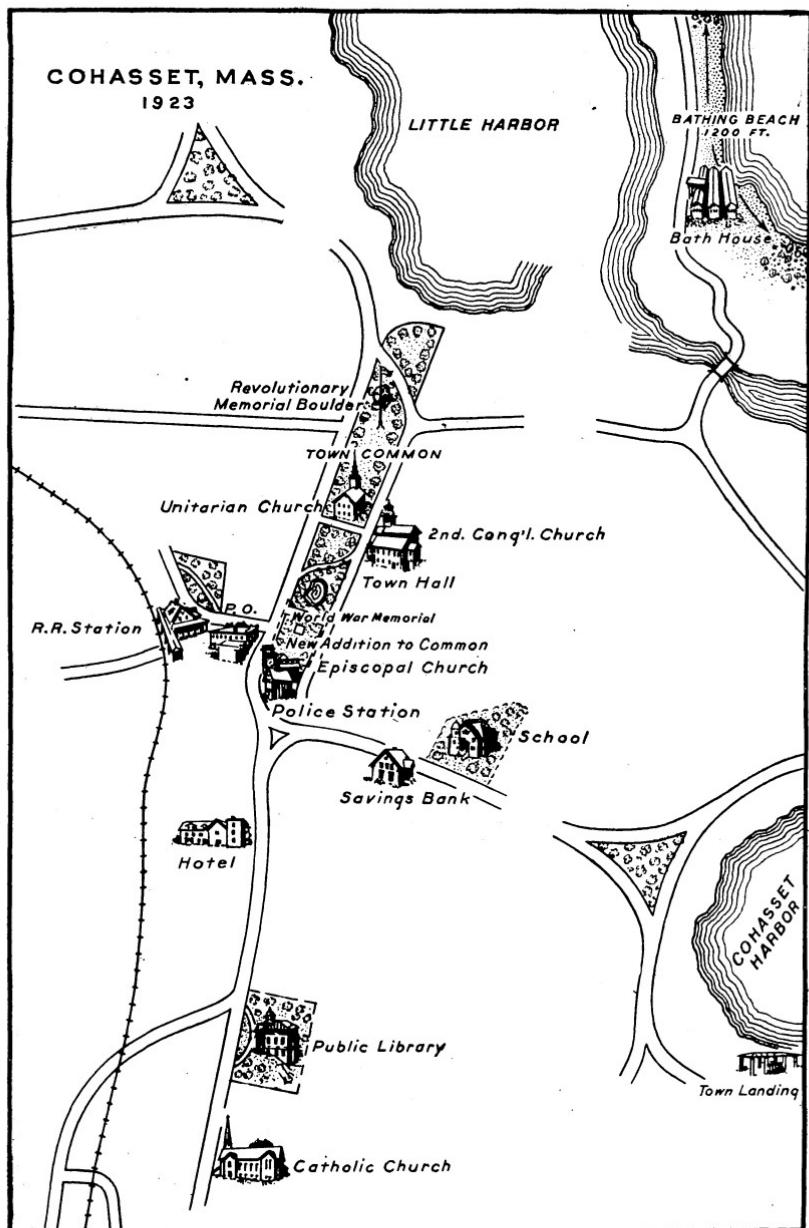


FIG. 7.—Cohasset, Mass., after replanning. Restored common, center; station park, left; bathing beach and pavilion, upper right

conveniences and under proper supervision. It has proved to be a lesson in community spirit."

VILLAGES ORIGINALLY PLANNED**UNIT PLANNING OF FARM COLONY AND VILLAGE—PATTERSON, CALIF.**

Careful initial planning for efficiency of arrangements and as a basis for social development is now the frequent prerequisite of modern farm colonization. Attainment of economic success is coupled with the desirability of a normal social life.



FIG. 8.—General view of planned village, Patterson, Calif.

Patterson village and the colony, the latter a tract of 18,000 acres divided into small irrigated farms, were originally planned in 1910 as a unit, and have been so developed. Comfort and attraction were sought in the roads leading to the village, each being planted with trees or shrubs of one variety.

Led by a chamber of commerce, a farm bureau, two women's civic clubs, and a home demonstration center, and supported by a farming population of 2,000, a village of 694 people has carried on the original plans for an orderly, convenient, and beautiful village.



FIG. 9.—Civic center in the originally planned village of Patterson, Calif.

The dominating feature of the layout of the village is its circular civic center formed by eight streets that approach the center like the spokes of a wheel. (See fig. 8.) At the hub is a well-planned circular plot of ground. There is a building of the prevailing type of California architecture in which are the village post office and the offices of the land company. The eight angles around the plot, formed by the eight streets which meet at the center, are severally occupied by a hotel, two banks, a business block, and two parks, the other two being reserved for future public buildings.

This action of the land company in laying out a village at once convenient and beautiful served to stimulate local civic pride as manifested by the hearty response of the people who, within the past four years, through community cooperation have built a \$12,000 public library, a community club house, a concrete swimming pool (50 by 150 feet), completed and fitted at an expense of \$5,000, a concrete grain elevator erected by a cooperative organization of grain growers at a cost of \$20,000, and a \$70,000 grammar school to supplement existing grammar and high schools. They have developed an automobile camp park and have conducted successful district fairs. In the erection of public and trade buildings, good architecture and planning and careful placing of buildings have been emphasized (fig. 9).

A UNIQUE VILLAGE CENTER—TALLMADGE, OHIO

It too often happened that people from New England and the East left their traditions of beauty and good arrangement behind when founding settlements in the West. Discouraged by pioneer conditions or influenced by the desire for a boom town, good planning often gave way to haphazard methods that produced quicker results.

Tallmadge, in the Western Reserve, was founded in 1807, by Rev. David Bacon, of Woodstock, Conn. Woodstock has always been known as a charming, well-designed village, and it seems probable that it influenced the planning of Tallmadge. As the founder of Tallmadge had been a missionary to the Indians for several years he naturally planned a religious community. The settlers were largely from Connecticut. Purchasing a township approximately 5 miles square, containing 15,225 acres, already laid out into 25 sections of 1 square mile each, he had it resurveyed, dividing it into 16 great lots, each separated by east and west and north and south main roads. Roads were also built from the four corners of the township diagonally to the village in the center, thus subdividing eight of the great lots with diagonal roads from northwest to southeast or from northeast to southwest, the other eight lots also cornering on the diagonal roads leading directly to the village in the center (fig. 10).

In the center of this village a public square of $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres was laid out, and in the center of this square a park was built. It was fenced in, planted to shade trees, and encircled by a public road within the square, a continuation of the converging roads from the country. In 1822 the church was erected within the park, and in 1840 the town hall was built there. (Fig. 11.)

Outside the park and around the square other public buildings, such as library, hotel, another church, stores, and private dwellings, were gradually erected, forming a civic center. The public library was established in 1813 on the joint-stock plan, supported by sales of shares, fines, assessments, and donations.

Compulsory church tithing was an initial requisite of land purchase, but this practice gradually fell into disuse and the community ceased to be of an obligatory denominational type. The general plan of the township and village, however, remains to this day although two corners of the township have since been ceded.

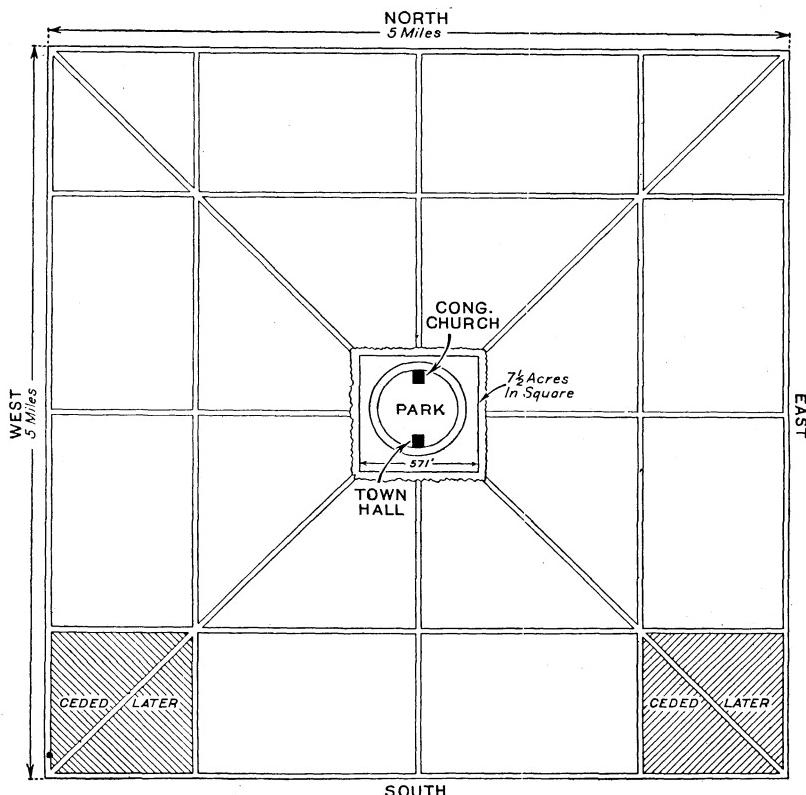


FIG. 10.—Plan of township and village center of Tallmadge, Ohio, as laid out in 1807

The arrangements of the roads produced eight corners at the center and six corners midway between the center and each of the four corners of the township. At each of these four groups of six corners a schoolhouse was established at an early date and other schoolhouses have been added at convenient localities from time to time.

The chief advantages of this plan are the effective grouping of public buildings on or near the parklike square in a civic center, and the short direct lines of communication in contrast with the section-line system of the West. One may go directly from the country to the village or from the country to the country school, and return. This

enables the schools the more readily to become rural community or civic centers.

VILLAGES CONTINUOUSLY PLANNED

AN ATTRACTIVE FARMING VILLAGE WITH NOTABLE CIVIC CENTER—
HADLEY, MASS.

It was in 1675 that "the angel of the Lord" appeared and saved Hadley. One of the regicides, a member of the court that had condemned Charles I of England to death, had been in hiding in a secret chamber of the pastor's home. Appearing suddenly to the great surprise of the people at worship, he advised them of an approaching Indian attack and led them to victory, returning to his hiding place again as suddenly and as secretly as he had come, never to be seen by them again.



FIG. 11.—Tallmadge, Ohio, civic center as laid out in 1807. Town hall, right; church, left; both in the circular park of the central square

Even at that time Hadley had some of the elements of a well-planned village. Its now justly celebrated West Street (fig. 12), laid out in 1659, was then the town common, with the village structures, on either side and with the church occupying the center of the common toward the north. The street is 330 feet wide and extends a full mile across the bend of the Connecticut river.

Two roads were laid out, one on each side of this broad street, enclosing a strip of green; and later a double row of elms was planted at the outer side of each road. Between the trees are the walks, and outside are the wide, smooth lawns leading up to the colonial dwellings and outbuildings. At one end of the broad avenue, down the long vista of gigantic, widespreading elms is a memorable view of river and mountains. The common, 40 acres in extent, has had various uses. During Indian troubles, as the village was surrounded by

a stockade it was the public grazing place. It has been used for military drills and for the mustering of large bodies of soldiers, also for public celebrations.



FIG. 12.—Town common, West Street, Hadley, Mass., laid out in 1559, as it appeared in 1923. Road and double row of trees on either side

As the center of population moved eastward another broad street called "Middle Street," was laid out a quarter of a mile east and was later bordered with elms. The principal street crossing these two, also wide and tree lined, is called Russell Street.

Church services were held in private homes until the first church building was completed on the common in 1670. This church was replaced later by a second building, and by a third erected in 1807. Much attention was given to the architectural features of the last building, which was surmounted by a Christopher Wren spire. In 1841, following the trend of population, this church was moved to a spot near the corner of Middle and Russell Streets and was thus the beginning of a noteworthy civic center (fig. 13). About



FIG. 13.—Partial view of civic center, Hadley, Mass. Left to right, primary school, library, town hall, church

the same time the present town hall was erected and located on the principal corner between the church and Russell Street. Of plain though dignified colonial architecture, it occupies a prominent place in the civic group. Directly across the street from the church and town hall, facing Russell Street, is the town grammar school built



FIG. 14.—Continuation of civic center, Hadley, Mass. Left to right, town hall, Congregational Church, intermediate school

in 1894 on a slight rise with broad smooth lawns, the commanding position in the civic center, which a school deserves (fig. 14). Directly across Russell Street from the town hall and opening on two streets is the town library, built in 1902, named after one of the prominent early settlers, and financed by 150 popular subscriptions and a donation. In 1919 it was remodeled as a memorial to Hadley soldiers by adding a gable, by installing rooms for patriotic societies, and by placing a tablet in memory of the soldiers. Close to the library on West Street is located the well-designed primary school.



FIG. 15.—North road gateway to Hadley, Mass.

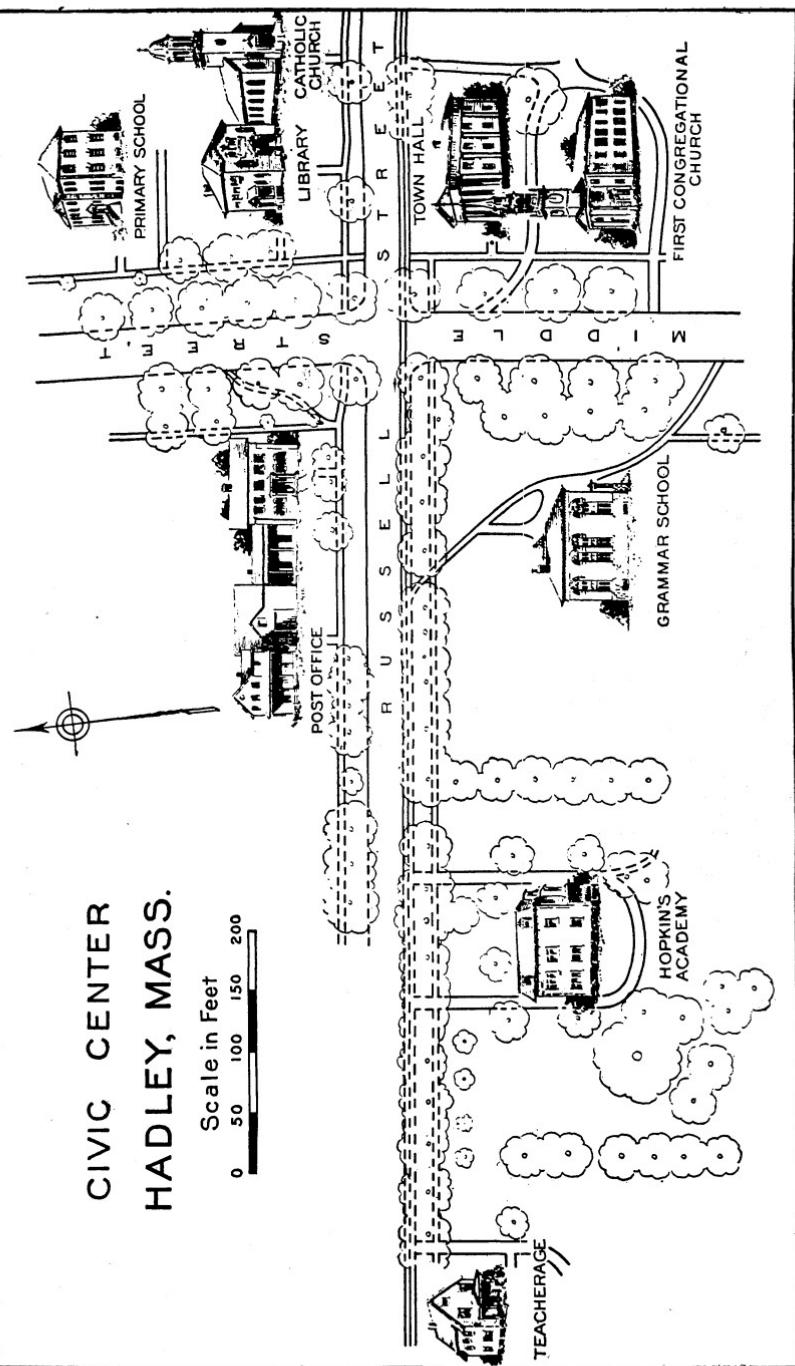


Fig. 16.—Complete view of civic center, Hadley, Mass.

erected in 1922 by taxation. Adjoining the grammar school on Russell Street is Hopkins Academy, said to be the second oldest classical institution of learning in New England, now largely supported by the town for high school students; and just beyond this is the "teacherage." Close to the library on Russell Street is another church; and on the fourth corner, set well back from the street, is the post office and general store.

Thus, in this town of 2,784 inhabitants of whom little more than half live in the center, nine of the town's important public buildings, practically all of them, are grouped about one corner intersected by the two main thoroughfares, on one of which interurban cars pass (fig. 16). Entrance to and departure from the town center are made through attractive gateways. (See figs. 15, 17, and 18.)

The people of the village as well as the people of the outlying



FIG. 17.—South road gateway to Hadley, Mass.

sections are mostly farmers. Those living in the village usually go daily to their fields on the outskirts. All improvements in this town of farmers were proposed, determined, and financed in the general assemblage at the town meeting.

A NEW ENGLAND FARMING VILLAGE—ELLINGTON, CONN.

Of good old English stock, adventurous, religious, independent, which during the eighteenth century gradually pushed its way up the Connecticut River valley from the Saybrook settlements, the people of Ellington were definitely incorporated into a town in 1786. From then until now farming has been the only important industry. The question of how to keep the boys and girls on the farm is never raised. Children take over the farms of their fathers and farms are sold, as a rule, only when there are no children in the family to

carry on. Only thus have the few foreigners gained a foothold here. Of the 2,127 population, the 500 living in the center are mostly retired farmers.

Here is found community spirit at its best. Farmers and villagers, the grange, farmers' clubs, churches, schools, and lodges work together in harmonious relationships. There is much civic pride—pride in well-tilled, clean, successful farms, in beautiful tree-lined roads, in clean streets and parks, in wide green lawns, in stately, dignified public buildings.

The visitor receives many definite impressions. The beautifully shaded approaches seem to welcome him and suggest a village of ordered serenity and contentment (figs. 20 and 21). His first view of the center, with its tall colonial church spire among the trees, is across a fringe of clean, smooth, well-fenced, well-husbanded farms



FIG. 18.—West road gateway to Hadley, Mass.

which encircle the village so closely that there is no room left anywhere for dump piles, ash heaps, and vacant lots filled with weeds and trash (see fig. 19).

The four main roads approaching the village from northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest merge at an attractive civic center about two small well-kept parks shaded with towering elms and maples. One of these, Church Park, was set aside as church land when the village was founded and was occupied by the church that is now situated in a commanding position across the street.

At Church Park is seen a manifestation of that early civic spirit which has always distinguished the village, for it was about 75 years ago that the pastor, after a stirring lecture on the subject of village beautification, called for volunteers who came the next day in a body to the park and planted elms and maples. Community spirit

is also responsible for the beauty of the adjacent common. On the day in 1910 when the library was dedicated, it was suggested that a "working bee" be held for the purpose of improving the common.

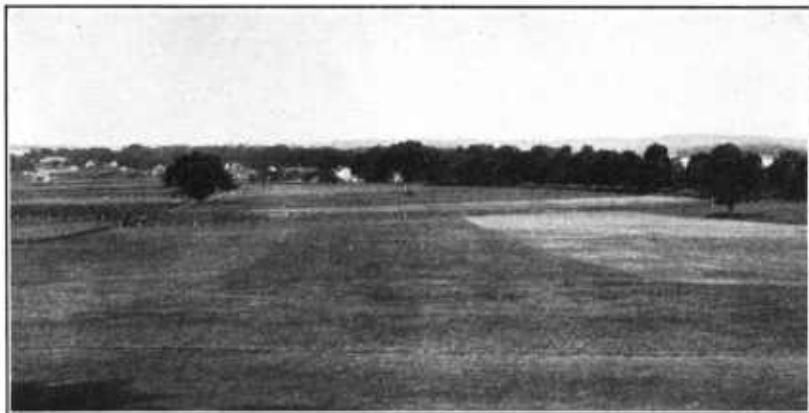


FIG. 19.—Partial view of the fringe about the rural village of Ellington, Conn. Maple Street at right. The fringe on every side of the village is as attractive as this view.

During the next two days nearly 100 men, with picks and shovels and with 30 teams, regraded the grounds and planted trees while the women of the village cooked and served lunches.



FIG. 20.—Southeast road gateway from farming community to Ellington, Conn.

Across the street from Church Park is the one church of the center, organized in 1737 (fig. 22), which serves the people of the center and nearly all the people of the town. Situated on a slight rise of ground



FIG. 21.—Maple Street gateway from village to farming community west of Ellington, Conn.

with well-kept lawn and frame of trees and facing the main street and the park, it rightfully takes its place in the town civic center.

West of the two small parks the village library occupies a prominent position among the public buildings and by its dignified architecture adds much to the whole setting. At the other end of the



FIG. 22.—Civic center, Ellington, Conn. Post office through original common at left; town park, front center; well-placed church at right

parks is the post office and general store, the old town hall and the village schoolhouse.

The smooth, wide, tree-bordered main streets make a strong appeal. They are a continuation of the principal roads which, approaching at angles and merging at the civic center, form rather irregular spaces that are more attractive than the regular squares.

Maple Street is bordered for a mile with century-old, overhanging elms and maples planted by the former owners of the abutting farms. At first the street is fringed with rows of cottages set well back from the street, with well-kept lawns. Further on these cottages give way to clean, well-fenced farms with well-tilled fields. In fact, Ellington has many features (fig. 23), simple and inexpensive in nature, which are within the means and possibilities of the ordinary rural community if only the foresight and the will are present.

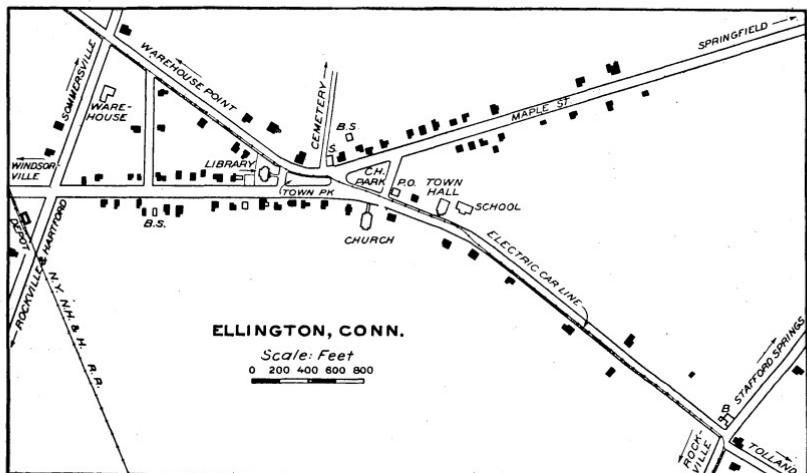


FIG. 23.—Plan of Ellington, Conn., showing natural road approaches and civic center

A COUNTRY VILLAGE REGENERATES ITSELF—STOCKBRIDGE, MASS.

Up in the Berkshire hills, in the ancient land of the Mohicans, where Rev. Jonathan Edwards and later Rev. David Dudley Field influenced the thought of a nation, there has arisen through the course of years a modern village with many well-planned features which has probably had a greater influence for good on the beauty and cleanliness of other towns than any village in the country. Here was organized in 1853 what is said to be the first village-improvement society in the United States, Laurel Hill Association, which has a record of continuous regular meetings and remarkable achievements for 70 years.

Stockbridge was not always a village with attractive features, although it has always possessed a small common and a wide main street. Previous to the society's organization it was a commonplace village of the hills without sidewalks, parks, or public reservations,

with dusty, ungraded streets shaded by a few trees, with the usual dump heaps, unkempt cemetery and run-down common, with few public buildings or private dwellings of notable architecture. It is now an outstanding example of what a rural village with little original planning may become, if its citizens consciously plan for the future and persistently carry out their plans.

Before any work was attempted, a committee appointed for the purpose spent a winter on the study of the needs to be accomplished. Since then the regular monthly meetings have been devoted to the same purpose. In addition to such committees as finance, sanitation, parks, streets, and cemetery, the village was divided into five districts with a committee to supervise each district. A planting plan was prepared by a nationally-known landscape architect and the committees have attempted to follow this plan.



FIG. 24.—Railroad gateway. Stockbridge, Mass.

The society early stated that its object was to improve, ornament, and care for streets, commons, and walks; to grade and maintain roadways; to plant trees; to lay out watercourses and parks; to beautify vacant places; in short, to work "till art combined with nature shall have rendered our town the most beautiful and attractive in our ancient commonwealth."

A visitor to the place is first impressed with the clean fringe about the village. Next he is surprised to find, in the village center of a town of 1,764 population, a gateway consisting of an attractive railway station and park. (See fig. 24.) When the old wooden station with its usual unkempt surroundings had burned and another wooden one was projected by the railway the association intervened and through its influence a stone building was erected surrounded with lawns, shrubs, and trees. The association provided half the cost, raising the money through popular subscription. It, also, acquired land adjacent to the station grounds, transformed it into a park, and assumed the cost of its maintenance. Entering the

main street, the visitor finds a broad well-paved park avenue, a mile in length, with green borders, pleasant walks, and overhanging elms, at one end of which is a civic center. The association has planted more than 2,000 trees, has made the entire system of village sidewalks, and is responsible for the draining and grading of the streets.

When the trolley company tried to run a line through the main street, the association and others opposed the proposition and secured public subscriptions for the purchase of another right of way. To do this it was necessary to purchase more land than was needed and 13 acres were fenced, baseball field and tennis courts were built, and the whole was deeded to the town as a recreation park.

The association took its name from Laurel Hill, a 10-acre wooded knoll near the center of town that had been deeded to the association,



FIG. 25.—Part of Stockbridge, Mass., civic center. Front, common; left to right, town hall, chimes tower, Jonathan Edwards monument, church, and rectory

which converted it into a park and playground. The hill has since been the especial care of the association, which holds its annual festival on the hill in a natural amphitheater where a stone rostrum and memorial seat have been built.

The association early took over the care of the cemetery. A hedge of Norway spruce was planted around it, walks and drives constructed, and other shade trees planted. The neglected village green was cleaned, mowed, and planted to trees (fig. 25). Triangular parks were developed at street corners and intersections, where later through private and public effort monuments and fountains were placed, all cared for by the association. It rescued from neglect the burial place of the Stockbridge Indians, making it into a small park marked by a granite shaft. Recently Monument Mountain, a neighboring State reservation, has been placed in its care and many trees have been planted on it. Other results inspired by the association include the planting of individual memorial trees; planting



FIG. 26.—Street corner parks, Stockbridge, Mass., showing fountain and soldiers' monument



FIG. 27.—A well-placed hotel on the main street facing a street corner park and the soldiers' monument, Stockbridge, Mass.

and care of trees by children; private and public yard improvement through stimulation by cash prizes; libraries and reading rooms fostered; the installation by the association of street receptacles for rubbish, and of street lights, running water, sewers, oil street sprinklers, and snow plows.

One value of an improvement society is that it may seek memorial gifts and inspire public donations to the town which add to its interest. The Stockbridge association has encouraged the placing of many such memorials. One of the leading churches is the gift of a local resident. Rev. David Dudley Field presented to the town a neighboring tract of 40 acres containing Ice Glen, a long cleft in a small wooded mountain, filled with caves and perpetual ice formations, which is maintained by the village and the association. This is much visited and has become a well-known picnic place. To this spot every year marches the famous ice-glen parade, usually



FIG. 28.—Memorial bridge on the path to Ice Glen, Stockbridge, Mass.

enacting an historical pageant on Laurel Hill and followed by further festivities at the recreation park and at the town hall.

On the village green, near the site of the early ministerial labors of Rev. Jonathan Edwards, a monument was erected to his memory from money largely subscribed at a reunion of 1,000 of his relatives. Cyrus W. Field presented to the town a small natural park near the village, the site of an old church. On the site of the first Indian mission church, Rev. David Dudley Field caused to be erected, in honor of his grandchildren, a stone campanile containing a clock and a chime of bells. Through the efforts of a member of the association, the Housatonic River near Stockbridge was redeemed. Formerly the village cesspool and dump, its banks were cleared and restored and its waters made clean for boating and other sports. An Italian citizen erected a fountain near the center of the village in one of the small parks, and in another of these parks a soldiers'

monument was placed through public subscriptions and town appropriation. (See figs. 26 and 27.) A memorial to a former president of the association has been built in the form of a walk from Laurel Hill to the Housatonic River and a graceful concrete foot bridge across the river has been erected leading to the path through the glen (fig. 28). One of the most pronounced influences of the association has been upon public and private architecture and landscaping. Prizes offered by the association and public-spirited citizens have encouraged this improvement even in the home-building of the poorer classes, one such prize of \$100 having been awarded to one of the town's most humble citizens.

A new town hall replaced the old building on the green. In addition to the town offices it has a room especially set aside for the use of the grange and contains a large public auditorium. The town library, established largely through popular subscriptions and a donation, is well housed with an attractive setting on the main street. The high school building, also a gift to the town, is very attractive and is fronted by a smooth, well-planted green lawn.

The association does not regard its work as completed and is planning for the future. Its operations are financed by popular subscriptions and gifts and it is now in possession of an invested fund, the income of which is to be used for continued improvement.

TYPES OF PLANNED FEATURES IN VILLAGES

GATEWAYS: RAILWAY

ARRANGEMENT OF RAILWAY STATION GROUNDS OF LIMITED SPACE— PARNASSUS, PA.

The railway station at Parnassus, Pa., is on a narrow strip of ground lying between a main thoroughfare and the railway tracks. Not much ground is available, but an excellent arrangement and treatment of the small space has been effected (fig. 29). The "all



FIG. 29.—An inviting railroad gateway. Parnassus, Pa.

the year round" plan of ground improvements was employed. Trees and shrubs, including hardy perennials, were used. Adjacent lands opposite the street and the tracks have been planted to screen off unsightly places and approaches.

A RAILWAY AND A CIVIC LEAGUE PRODUCE AN EFFECTIVE VILLAGE ENTRANCE—MOORESVILLE, N. C.

The railway which runs through Mooresville, N. C., has always shown an interest, even in a financial way, in having attractive station grounds. In its general offices a woman is employed whose duty it is to look after and assist such enterprises, and field men to care for the grounds. With such interest on the part of the railway, supported by local pride, there is not much excuse for towns along the line having uninviting gateways.

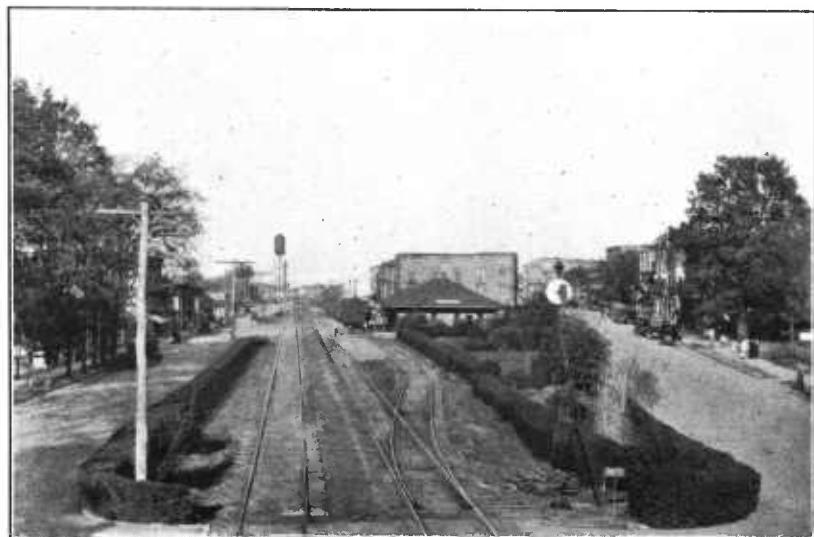


FIG. 30.—A convenient railroad gateway at Mooresville, N. C.

The railway grounds at Mooresville occupy an important place in the center of the town plan, at the lower part of the V made by the two most important streets converging at an acute angle. On both sides of the street forming this V are the principal commercial buildings. As the lower part of the grounds was much used by merchants as a car unloading place it was very unsightly.

Knowing of the official interest of the railway, the local civic league initiated a campaign for a town gateway which should be in keeping with its prominent position in the town plan. Encouraged by a personal visit from the railway representative, the league proceeded to raise \$50. Another unloading place was secured and, using local equipment and help, the league cleaned up the old place, plowed and fertilized it, and partially enclosed it with a chain fence (fig. 30). The railway furnished shrubs and flowers, did the planting, and pays a gardener to care for these grounds and those of four other stations.

A general town clean-up and improvement movement soon started, extending to private residents, many of whom employed landscape

gardeners to replan their lawns. The league raised more money and greatly improved the run-down cemetery. A prominent citizen states that the new street paving is a direct result of the civic interest aroused by the gateway campaign and its results. The civic league has purchased and reconstructed a building to be used as a community house, at a cost of \$4,500, financing it by receipts from entertainments and the sale of shares. When the vice-president of the railway came to the town he was so impressed with the cooperation of the citizens in improving the station grounds and the town that he promised a new station in keeping with the grounds and the civic pride. Inci-



FIG. 31.—Even a trolley line may have an improved village gateway. Overland Park, Kans.

dentially, the merchant who protested the most urgently, prophesied personal business ruin if the unloading place were removed, and even threatened injunction proceedings, is now an enthusiastic supporter of the enterprise.

GATEWAYS: TROLLEY

PROFITS ATTEND GOOD PLANNING IN RURAL ELECTRIC LINE STATIONS—OVERLAND PARK, KANS.

All electric railways are interested in the material development of the towns and villages through which they pass and many of them have real estate interests in these places, the value of which they like

to increase. An electric line, extending from Kansas City, Mo., into rural Kansas as far as Olathe, has found that good village planning brings much profit. In many of the small villages where it owns real estate it has erected attractive stations in well-planted grounds in an effort so to improve the gateways to the villages that people will not only enter but be glad to remain. For example, in one of these places, Overland Park, a village of 100 people, the electric railway company has built a station plant valued at \$3,000, of which \$1,000 was applied to the preparation of the grounds, 2 acres in extent. The grounds were graded to uniform surface, sown to blue-grass and planted with many shrubs and shade trees (fig. 31). The

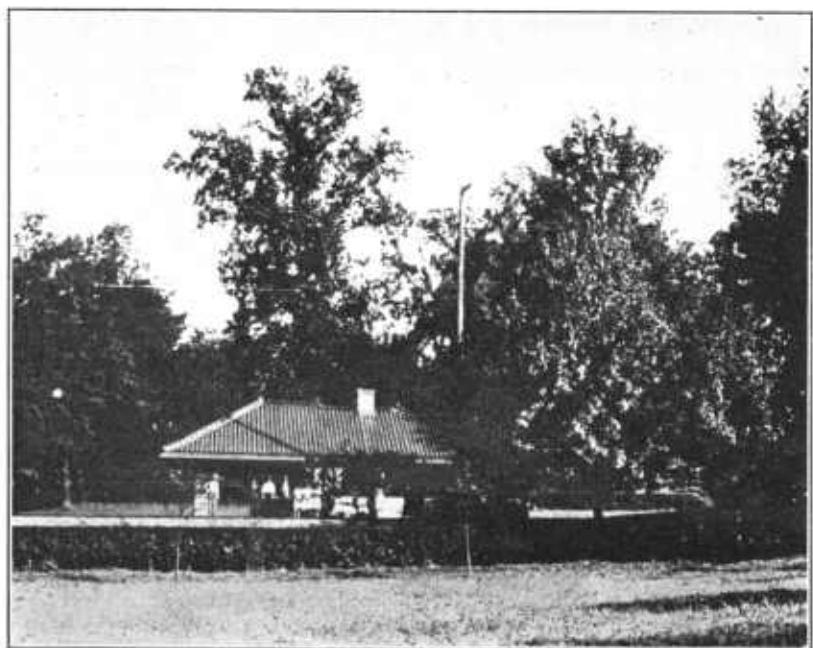


FIG. 32.—Trolley station built by citizens. Glen View, Ky.

company believes it is a paying proposition. The general manager says:

Our reasons for beautifying the grounds were that we were large owners of suburban property at Overland Park and other stations and beautifying our stations was an invitation to those who purchase property to do likewise. The result has been the development of a nice suburban district. I believe it is a profitable proposition to develop as we have. Of course we have had similar experience in other localities. Our experience has been that it is much better to start such development right and in the end you will have a better community and a more beautiful residence district.

CITIZENS BUILD TROLLEY STATION AND POST OFFICE—GLEN VIEW, KY.

Some villages are long-suffering in the use of trolley stations that are eyesores. Glen View, Ky., passengers for many years patiently used a dilapidated wooden shack. Finally they decided to build a new station themselves, 10 men becoming financial sponsors.

A stone station with overhanging tile roof was located among the trees on a grassed plot 250 feet long, bordered by hedges, in all costing more than \$2,500. (Fig. 32.) As the Post Office Department was about to close the local office and substitute street boxes, the citizens included in the building a room for the post office. In addition to his small compensation for looking after the mails, the postmaster receives from the community a salary for looking after the station grounds and approaches. The trolley company reciprocates by furnishing electricity without cost to light the building.

GATEWAYS: WATERFRONT

A VILLAGE REDEEMS ITS WATER FRONT—BELLEVUE, IOWA

An example of what a small town may do to clean up its water front and restore it to the dignity that the front door of a town should possess is found at Bellevue, Iowa.



FIG. 33.—An improved water gateway. Bellevue, Iowa

Bellevue, a boat-landing town of 1,700 population on the Mississippi River, had the usual river-front conditions that such towns have to contend with—narrow, poorly lighted streets, vacant lots overgrown with weeds or filled with refuse, and poorly constructed small buildings. About eight years ago it was decided that passengers on passing boats and excursionists from steamers dropping anchor should have a favorable impression of the village. Now in place of the old conditions there is a neat little park of close-cropped greensward with plantings of trees, shrubs, and flowers; a permanent observation and band stand; a large boulder bearing a World War honor roll; a World War cannon, a substantial flagpole, and seats; all approached from the river by a concrete landing, walks and steps 35 feet wide, with attractive electric-light settings. (Fig. 33.) A well-graded, well-lighted street parallels the park. The total cost of

the enterprise was \$8,500, obtained from numerous public subscriptions and a 2-mill town tax.

As soon as the park was completed adjacent property owners began to clean up their premises, paint and repair buildings, and improve their surroundings.

Band concerts, public speaking, and celebrations take place in the park, and when in June 1923, the 250th anniversary of the explorations of Father Marquette and Louis Joliet was celebrated, the people of Bellevue received and entertained their thousands of guests at their new water-front gateway.

GATEWAYS: ROAD

VILLAGE ENTRANCES THAT EXPRESS BOTH WELCOME AND FAREWELL—
SIMSBURY, CONN.

Inviting gateways welcome those who enter and serve as a hearty “come again” to those departing.

Simsbury, Conn., ranks high as a beautiful village with its memorial gateway of stone, bronze, and wrought iron; with its library,



FIG. 34.—North wagon road gateway to Simsbury, Conn.

community house, club building, churches, schools, and private dwellings of harmonious designs and settings; with its wide lawns, its park, and its shaded streets. All of this is anticipated at any one of the three main road entrances, because of the absence of the dilapidated shacks, dump heaps, weed-covered vacant lots and rundown fences so often found along approaches to villages. (Figs. 34 and 35.)

STREETS

IMPROVEMENT OF A MAIN STREET—FOREST CITY, N. C.

Municipal officials can generally be depended upon to vote material improvements, but not so with those aesthetic betterments which

merely make the place more satisfying as a permanent home. Herein lies the value of civic organizations, especially women's clubs.



FIG. 35.—South wagon road gateway to Simsbury, Conn.

In recent years the officials of Forest City, N. C., which has a population of 2,300, have submitted bond-issue propositions to the total value of \$300,000 for waterworks, sewerage, electric light, and school systems which have been approved at the elections. Not satisfied with this, the Ladies' Civic Club finally succeeded in persuading



FIG. 36.—Main Street, Forest City, N. C., as improved by the Ladies' Civic Club

the town officials to permit them to place some parks along the center of Main Street, the club to finance and maintain them.

The street was exceedingly broad, bordered by low buildings with pavement from curb to curb. A landscape architect from a neighboring city was called in to draw plans which provided for three small parks down through the center of the street, a distance of about three blocks, separated by cross streets. The parks are planted with trees, shrubs, and flowers, have cement curbing, are provided with a flagpole, seats, and an inscription stone, and are to be dedicated to the ex-service men of the county (fig. 36). The total cost was \$2,500 secured from the proceeds of entertainments of various kinds and public subscriptions. Maintenance expenses are from \$100 to \$150 a year, obtained from similar sources. The city fathers are now considering taking over the care of the parks.

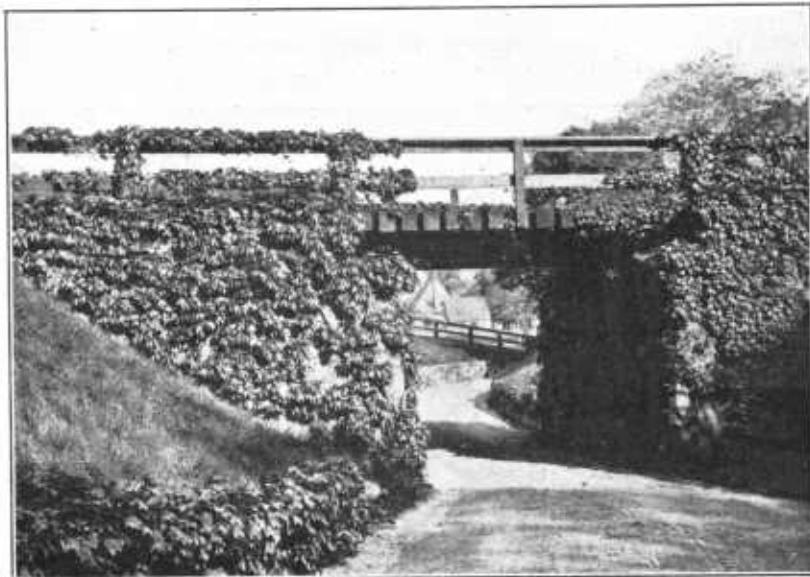


FIG. 37.—Bridges may be beautiful as well as durable, Falmouth, Mass.

BRIDGES

AN ATTRACTIVE BRIDGE AT A VILLAGE PORTAL—FALMOUTH, MASS.

One of the principal requisites for a bridge is durability, but a bridge may be beautiful as well, yet reasonable in cost. With the passing of the old arched stone bridges, concrete has come into use, which for strength and beauty readily takes its place. Shrubs and vines add much to such bridges. Figure 37 shows a bridge about 100 yards from the railway station at Falmouth, Mass., built over a road leading from the village. The concrete abutments and the approaches have been softened and redeemed by a vine, an effective and inexpensive method of treatment.

COMMONS

A NOTABLY ATTRACTIVE VILLAGE FEATURES A TOWN COMMON—
BARRE, MASS.

The town common, the central, green, open but shaded space around which the principal buildings of the town are grouped, is the most attractive and distinctive feature of the New England village. It has become, in many instances, the center of the social life of the people and a place of recreation.

The Barre common, 150 years old, is about 550 yards long by 100 yards wide, tapering at one end, and is surrounded by broad paved streets. Cross streets divide the common into three parts. One end is fenced and provided with a fountain, a war monument, benches, hedges, and gravel walks. A band stand is in the unfenced portion. Large century-old maple trees give abundant shade. (Fig. 38.)



FIG. 38.—A portion of the common at Barre, Mass., is reserved for public celebrations

Facing the common on all sides are the stores and the following public buildings: Town hall built 85 years ago, post office, two hotels, the library building owned by the library association, and four churches. These buildings are well designed, have attractive landscape settings and are well placed on the common. Not far from the common are two school buildings of superior type and a beautiful and well-cared-for cemetery. Plans have been completed for the purchase of certain property abutting a street on the common and its conversion into a park. The common is in frequent use for community fairs, band concerts, memorial exercises and public entertainments.

Since the formation of the village-improvement society, about 30 years ago, the common, streets, and private and public places have been well kept. The town has 3,300 population, the village about 1,500, and the improvement society has 500 members. It maintains the common and parks, builds and cares for sidewalks, plants shrub-

bery and flowers, and for this work regularly employs one or two men. It finances its work by receipts from entertainments, raising about \$3,000 in 1923. It has a yearly budget of about \$1,000 and a balance of \$10,000. A live village-improvement society and a well-planned village usually go hand in hand.

PARKS

THE ORIGINAL VILLAGE CROSSROADS BECOMES THE SITE OF THE VILLAGE PARK—LE ROY, OHIO

Among the local improvements brought about by the village of Le Roy, through the encouragement of the local farmers' mutual insurance company and its employees, was the laying out of an attractive park opposite the two churches near the center of the village. (Fig. 39.) One of these churches, of the colonial type of architecture, had been standing over 75 years and is much prized for its dignity.



FIG. 39.—A country village park with a background of churches. Le Roy, Ohio

The park was one of the results of a far-reaching campaign for village improvement and was laid out by a landscape gardener. It is situated at the old intersection of the two crossroads where the village had its beginning 80 years ago. It is oval in shape and is planted with shade trees and flowers. Well-designed electric lights surround it.

RIVER-BANK IMPROVEMENTS

THE TOWN DUMP BECOMES A SCENIC ASSET—LEWISBURG, PA.

“That place has been there as long as I can remember,” said one town father. “There has got to be some place for the town refuse,” said another, “and, besides, that’s the natural escape for the sewer.”

Age and even tradition were on the side of the town fathers. “That place” had been there farther back than memory ran. Every time the people went into the country or across the river to the adjacent city the town dump was the last reminder of home. Every time the people from the country, the neighbors across the river, or the strangers from the big cities arrived in the town their first impression was conveyed by “that place.”

But the women citizens were not dismayed. They formed a civic club, began a backfire of agitation and propaganda, and accumulated funds against the time when inertia could be overcome. Through such enterprises as lecture courses, local plays and food sales, and through donations, sufficient money was secured to swing the enterprise. The block of land on the river front between the two bridges finally became the property of the club. Old shacks were removed, refuse cleared away, the ground leveled, lawn made, trees, flowers and shrubs planted, walks built, and electric lights installed. And when the municipal officers couldn't see their way clear to install the pipes to conduct the overflow of the village sewer underground to the river the women held more sales and entertainments and paid for the work themselves. In all more than \$7,000 was raised and spent on the work of redeeming the town dump and improving the river bank.

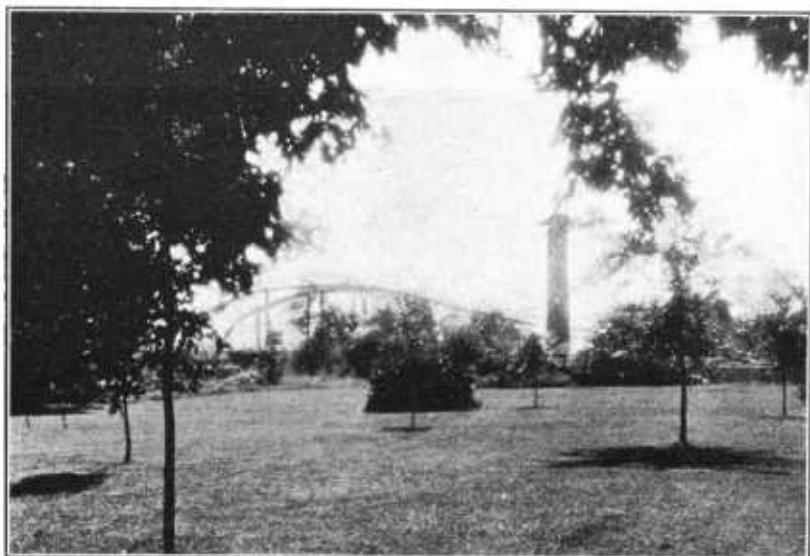


FIG. 40.—The town dumping ground as redeemed by the Ladies' Civic Club, Lewisburg, Pa.

Now the last impression of the departing visitor is of wide lawns and green trees, and the incoming guest or stranger has the same aesthetic pleasure as a welcome. (See fig. 40.)

LOCAL RESERVATIONS

A PICTURESQUE SPOT PRESERVED FOR PUBLIC SOCIAL USE—BARRE, MASS.

Within the town and adjacent to the village center of Barre, a picturesque stream of water rushes through a deep gorge, forming a canyon to the depth of 50 feet in places. The land on both sides is covered with pine, hemlock, and chestnut trees and a profusion of flowers and ferns. The spot has been a favorite picnic ground for generations and the show place of the town (fig. 41).

Although the abutting land was in private hands, long-continued use had given the community the sense of possession, until the an-

nouncement was suddenly made that the owner was about to cut down the timber, which would practically destroy the value of the spot as a recreation ground.

In an emergency of this kind municipal or community action is preferable; but as both are necessarily slow, the town was fortunate in possessing public-spirited citizen who purchased 20 acres of land covering both sides of the gorge. The village then proceeded to link the glen with its other attractive physical features by attractive road approaches. The purchaser planted 2 acres of pines, built two dams, a bridge, and summer house, made entrances and paths, placed benches and stairways, and erected signs which read, "For the use of the public." Finally, he placed a clause in his will to the effect that after his death the project should become the property of the town.

CEMETERIES

AN ATTRACTIVE CEMETERY LOCALLY PLANNED — LAN- ARK, ILL.

In this village of 1,300 people, a citizen who could draw elementary plans, a zealous caretaker, and a far-seeing board of managers have produced a village cemetery which not only attracts wide attention but has stimulated the better planning of the cemeteries of half a dozen other villages.

For many years after its inception in 1862 this cemetery was little more than a burial place, increased in size as need arose, the property of the village but the especial care of no one. A number of years ago, however, local plans were drawn with a view to the future, plantings were started, and it was later placed in the care of a board of managers appointed by the mayor.

It has an area of 22 acres planted with trimmed arborvitae hedges and framed with elms and maples (fig. 42). Within the area are three small circular parks planted with pine or maple trees, fenced, and provided with benches. Of late years the maintenance expense of \$1,500 yearly, including the salary of a caretaker, and improve-



FIG. 41.—A view in the glen reserved for public social use at Barre, Mass.

ments, has been financed from interest received from an endowment fund obtained from the sale of lots at \$50 each.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

A GROUP OF BUILDINGS AND A PARK WHICH PRESERVE BALANCE— BRANDON, VT.

No matter how architecturally beautifully and well proportioned a bare group of buildings may be it never attains its full measure of



FIG. 42.—A neglected cemetery redeemed. Lanark, Ill.

beauty until relieved and set off by a growth of trees. On the other hand, a park or common framed by rows of unattractive buildings never attains its best results.

Many years ago the site of the park at Brandon, Vt., was a sandy, treeless place around an old well and surrounded by dilapidated

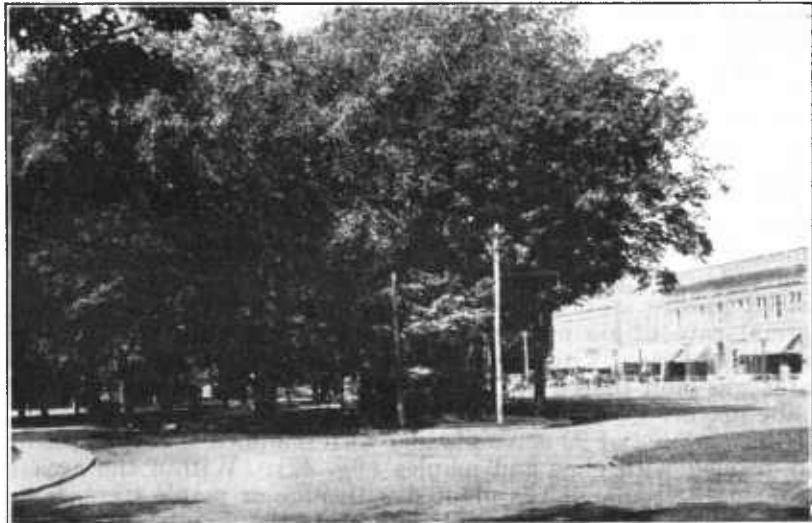


FIG. 43.—Buildings grouped on a park at Brandon, Vt.

buildings. A number of citizens planted trees there as a town improvement, and later a fountain and a band stand were added. Gradually the bordering groups of ugly buildings were replaced by modern buildings of good design, or new facades were added or old fronts were made uniform, resulting in a greatly improved appearance.

As the park is the center from which important streets radiate, and as it is now lined on all sides by groups of modern public and commercial buildings, it has become an attractive center of an altogether beautiful village. (See fig. 43.)



FIG. 44.—At Primghar, Iowa, the county courthouse occupies the central square

A COUNTY COURTHOUSE OCCUPIES CENTRAL SQUARE OF VILLAGE—
PRIMGHAR, IOWA

Courthouses in practically all sections of the country have often been of good design and have been given a conspicuous place in the town plan, frequently occupying the center of a public square. When the new courthouse of O'Brien County, Iowa, was erected in 1916 it was located on the site of the old one, on the most prominent central square of the county seat, a village of less than 1,000 population. The limestone building cost \$165,000 and is a well-equipped, modern county office and court building. On the four streets around this square the main business houses have been placed, the whole making a distinctive civic center. (See fig. 44.)

The ground improvements were planned and supervised by a trained horticulturist. The plantings consist of elm and maple trees and a variety of shrubs. The purchase and planting of trees and shrubs, building of walks, and preparation of grounds cost \$1,300, paid by the county.

A FINE COURTHOUSE ON A WESTERN PRAIRIE—LAKE ANDES, S. DAK.

The courthouse at Lake Andes, S. Dak., shows that the love for beautiful things was not absent from the nature of our western pioneers, but was merely held in abeyance while the more pressing need of subduing a continent was in progress. The country about it is still sparsely settled, for the population of the county, with an area of 1,134 square miles, is little over 16,000, and is given over almost exclusively to farming. No village has over 900 of population; that of the county seat is 867.

As soon as these farmers had overcome primitive conditions, they began the construction of a county courthouse. With rare foresight the planning of both building and grounds was put in the hands of those who felt that this permanent structure, occupying a rise of ground in a conspicuous position in the county seat, should be built along good architectural lines. It should be surrounded by well-laid-out and well-kept grounds, so as to have a compelling effect upon con-

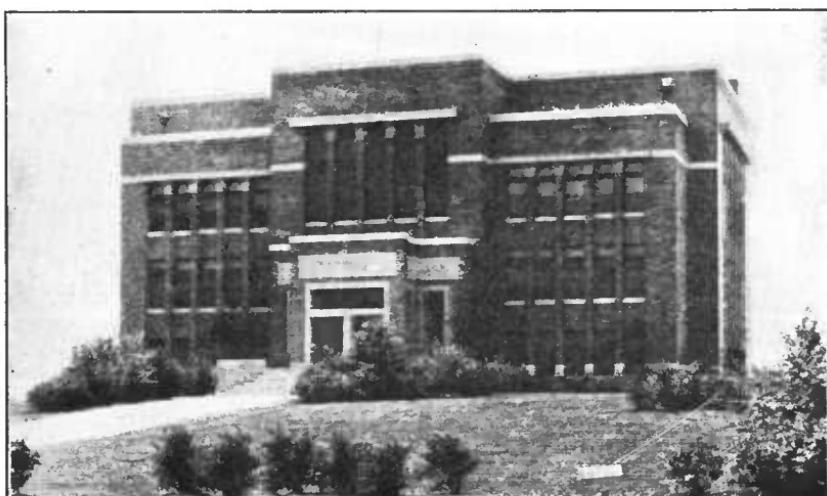


FIG. 45.—The county courthouse in a western prairie village. Lake Andes, S. Dak.

structive efforts in the whole county which was just finishing its temporary pioneer existence and entering upon its permanent home life. (Fig. 45.)

A TOWN HALL AND A GRANGE HALL, WELL DESIGNED AND WELL LOCATED—PETERSHAM, MASS.

Although the same consideration has not been given to the designing and placing of town halls that has been given to county courthouses, there are outstanding exceptions to this rule. Town halls should represent the good taste, the dignity, the power and wealth of the town as no other buildings do, and they stand in the same relation to the town that the courthouse does to the county; therefore it would seem that equal attention should be given to design and location.

The town hall at Petersham, Mass., a town founded in 1733, is a striking example in many ways. It was built in 1850 and cost about

\$7,500. In addition to its stately colonial design, including a famous dome, it has an excellent location on the common. The grange hall also has a colonial front and position on the common, across the street from the town hall. (See Fig. 46.) The building, occupied by the grange since 1875, has lodge room, kitchen, and dining room to serve its 128 members.

The common itself is conspicuously beautiful and is surrounded by civic and trade buildings of exceptional merit, including three churches, school, library, hotel, grange hall, post office, and store buildings—all well placed in good settings, and the whole forming a civic center.

The town, with a population of 642, engaged principally in farming, has an active village-improvement society organized in 1870



FIG. 46.—Well-placed civic buildings at Petersham, Mass. Town hall, right; Grange Hall, left

with about 75 members including the selectmen. This society has much to do with the beauty, cleanliness, and orderliness of the town.

A SCHOOL BUILDING THAT ATTRACTS—FREEHOLD, N. J.

Monmouth County, N. J., has frequently been a competitor for the honor of being the richest agricultural county in the country. Freehold, the county seat, is largely an agricultural town. Most of the business men and the majority of the residents are or have been engaged in farming.

Their especial pride is their beautiful high school, located on the main street in the center of the town, its curriculum linked up with farming, and its architecture and grounds forming a most attractive spot (fig. 47).

The broad desire to associate the practical and convenient with the beautiful in education, and the need of specimens of trees and

flowers for classroom work, influenced the plan made by the teachers and officials. The local florist, a retired farmer, planned the grounds and supervised the work. Among the plantings are such trees as linden, oak, catalpa, flowering cherry, Japanese maple, weeping birch, beech, mulberry, cypress, dwarf Norway maple, fir, Japanese spruce, blue spruce, Japanese cypress, several varieties of arborvitae, and there are many varieties of shrubs and flowers. The cost of the plantings was \$400. Connected with the school is a small greenhouse for the use of classes in agriculture, which has become a commercial proposition, the profits going to the school.



FIG. 47.—A schoolhouse that attracts. Freehold, N. J.

A MIDDLE WEST VILLAGE LIBRARY ASSOCIATES PLANTING WITH BOOKS—
ARMADA, MICH.

As early as 1901 the country and village people of Armada, Mich., had determined to have a public library and had voted almost unanimously at a township election to tax themselves for this purpose. The first books purchased did not have a permanent home but were kept in various stores until the last one burned.

About 1913 a professor from the State university delivered a lecture in the village under the auspices of the village-improvement club, on the subject of landscape gardening. Among the auditors was a retired farmer whose son was working his farm on shares, both graduates of the State agricultural college. The president and a majority of the township board were also farmers.

As a result of the lecture the retired farmer pictured for the future an adequate free public library available for rural people, housed in a well-designed building with an attractive setting and background, which should be a social center. The library board agreed to his plans.

The township library tax amounted to about \$1,000 a year for the purchase of books and the building and maintenance of a library. As this method was slow, the librarian appealed to the Carnegie Foundation for funds. Small as the village was, the zeal and earnestness of these rural people and their willingness to tax themselves prevailed, and \$8,000 was allotted by the foundation for the building itself. The township tax was applied to the purchase of a lot, to books and furniture, and, after completion, to maintenance purposes.

When the library board received the building from the contractors it was surrounded by a chaos of stones, rubbish, and barren clay. As no funds were available for improving the grounds, a community campaign was initiated. A landscape architect at the State university prepared ground plans free of charge, and a farmers' grading and planting bee was held. (See fig. 48.) Actual money spent for improvement was only \$150, largely for elm trees, shrubs, and vines.



FIG. 48.—A country village library—at once substantial and beautiful. Armada, Mich.

When completed, children from their savings purchase pieces of furniture and the leading men of the community carried the 1,800 books and the furniture to the new building.

The library collection, an office, and a museum occupy the first floor. In the ground floor are the assembly room, furnished with piano and stereopticon, a magazine room, and toilets. The grounds are 120 by 100 feet, and are cared for by a retired farmer at little expense.

In addition to the library service to village and country, the assembly room is used as a meeting place by four farmers' organizations, the school board, the women's clubs, the town association, and by other clubs for public gatherings. Since the grounds were completed the buildings have become the pride of the town, the high school grounds and those of many dwellings have been planted, and the secretary of the board is constantly in receipt of requests for information and advice from other towns.

A MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL IN AN UNUSUAL SETTING—CANBY, MINN.

This public hospital, owned by a town of 1,700 inhabitants, is located two blocks from the main business corner, but is well back from the street. It is in a quiet setting of smooth, well-shaded green lawn and has a deep-shaded veranda. (See fig. 49.) If health is influenced by environment, early improvement might well be expected in the condition of patients of this hospital, because of the tranquil surroundings and the freedom from distracting noises.

The building itself was a gift; but it was repaired and furnished and the grounds were enlarged and improved through receipts from general voluntary contributions, a stimulating campaign being carried out by citizens to launch the enterprise.



FIG. 49.—Health in attractive surroundings. Canby, Minn., municipal hospital

Successful municipal operation was difficult at first, as the only support the hospital received from the county government was actual payment for county charges at the rate of \$1 per day together with the \$1,000 paid by the county for this contract. Now, however, it is self-sustaining, under the management of the town council through a hospital committee.

A WELL-PLACED COMMUNITY CENTER ADDS TO AN OTHERWISE BEAUTIFUL VILLAGE—WAVERLY, PA.

The farming village of Waverly, Pa., already possessed many good planning features, with its curving roads and streets following the physical contour of the country, its inviting road gateways, the clean fringe about the town and attractive farmsteads and gardens, the neat public and private buildings on broad lawns, and the wealth of well-placed trees.

The airplane view (see title page) shows that the community building and public playground have been placed in the center of the village on the main street, a position in keeping with their nature. The building occupies the center of a 2-acre space, is placed well back from the street, and its generous proportions are emphasized and set off by wide, open lawns. A few well-placed trees frame the grounds. Tennis courts, wading pool, and other recreation features are located with a view to symmetry.

The well-appointed building has in its basement bowling alleys, pool room, barber shop, men's lavatory and showers. On the first floor are the post office, canteen, reading-room, sun-parlor, lounge, reception room, assembly hall with its moving picture booth, and women's showers. On the second floor are the public library including its radio set, and the private apartment of the secretaries. The house supports a trained nurse for the village and farming community, a free kindergarten, and art, handiwork, dramatic, sewing, basketry, and playground classes, and is the headquarters of the town supervisors, the school board, the grange, the parent-teachers association and the boy scouts. It is also the center for elections and for school commencements and other exercises.

This plant was given to the people of Waverly, but there were many architectural and planning features involved, the solution of which should be of value to other towns and communities of even more than 500 population.

CONCLUSION

These examples of successful village planning are taken largely from villages of the usual rural type. In all of these planning projects difficulties were encountered and obstacles overcome, and the resulting benefits showed that the efforts were well worth while. It is hoped that this recital of what has actually been accomplished by village people in making village life more agreeable and satisfying and of the ease with which the work was done, will demonstrate (1) that such work is needed both for the people who live in villages and for the farm people who use the villages; (2) that it is never too early or too late to begin; (3) that it is often the economical thing to do; (4) that the expense is not prohibitive; (5) that results are commensurate with costs; (6) that the present and future should be treated as a whole but that plans should be flexible and subject to change; (7) that both fixed original planning and spontaneous natural planning have their value; and (8) that profitable and wholesome growth of villages and of community social life can evolve only along well-planned and well-ordered lines.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

January 16, 1925

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